

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SANA UNIVERSITY

SUMMARIES: DEVELOPMENT OF SANA UNIVERSITY OFFERS USG
SOME SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES.

1. SANA UNIVERSITY OPENED ITS CLASSES IN 1971. IT HAS BEEN
FUNDED BY KUWAITIS AND STAFFED BY EGYPTIANS AND UP UNTIL NOW
THIS COMBINATION HAS PROVIDED YEMENIS WITH A SECOND-RATE
EDUCATION WHICH IS ALMOST IRRELEVANT TO YEMEN'S DEVELOPMENT
NEEDS. CHANGE PROVED DIFFICULT WHEN 99 PERCENT
OF AL FUNDS AND THE ENTIRE STAFF COME FROM ABORAD.

2. SANA UNIVERSITY HAS 3200 STUDENTS STUDYING IN FIVE
FACULTIES--ARTS, SCIENCE, COMMERCE AND ECONOMICS, SHARIA AND
LAW, AND EDUCATION. FACULTIES OF ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE
ARE SCHEDULED TO BE ADDED IN 1980-81. FACULTY ABOUT ONE
HUNDRED OF WHICH 22 ARE YMEMENI BUT MOST YEMENIS ARE TEACHING
ASSISTANTS WAITING TO GO ABROAD FOR MAY STUDY. THERE ARE THREE
YEMENI PH.D.S, ONE FROM US, ONE FROM GERMANY WHO TEACH
FULL-TIME AND ONE FROM FRANCE WHO TEACHES PART-TIME.
THERE ARE TOW FULL-TIME INSTRUCTORS WITH MA FROM US AND
ONE ADDITIONAL WHO TEACHES PART-TIME. REMAINING FACULTY
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IS ALMOST ENTIRELY EGYPTIAN.

3. IN THE FALL OF 1976, HOWEVER, YARG TOOK DR. ABD AL-
KARIM AL-IRYANI, MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT, YEMEN'S BEST
TECHNOCRAT WHO HOLDS PH.D. FROM YALE, AND NAMED HIM BOTH
MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND PRESIDENT SANA UNIVERSITY.

IRYANI HAS PROVED IN FIVE MONTHS HE CAN WIN COOPERATION OF KUWAITI FINANCIAL BUREAUCRATS AS WELL AS PROVIDE STATURE NECESSARY TO OVERCOME PEDANTIC OPPOSITION OF EGYPTIAN TEACHING STAFF. (SEE SANA A-02 FOR IRYANI EFFORT, AT SAME TIME, TO MODERNIZE REST OF SYSTEM YEMENI EDUCATION.)

4. TO ASSIST IN OVERHAULING SANA UNIVERSITY, BOTH YEMENIZING AND MODERNIZING IT, DR. IRYANI CHOSE MUHAMMAD AL-MUTTAHAR AS HIS VICE PRESIDENT. MUTTAHAR RETURNED LAST SUMMER WITH AN MA IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION FROM UNIVERSITY OF INDIANA. MUTTAHAR, VERY YOUNG (26) BUT VERY BRIGHT, HAS WORKED WELL WITH IRYANI BUT INEXPERIENCE OF MUTTAHAR AND SECOND JOBS OF IRYANI HAVE PROVED HEAVY BURDENS.

5. TWO MEN HAVE PROGRAM OF REFORM FOR UNIVERSITY, HOWEVER, NEED IS FOR DETAILED LECTURES, CLASSES, QUIZZES, SEMESTERS, CREDITS--LIKE US HAS--RATHER THAN EGYPTIAN STYLE LECTURE COURSES WHICH CULMINATE, AT END OF YEAR, WITH SINGLE AL-IMPORTANT EXAM. THIS MEANS MUCH MORE WORK FOR TEACHERS, AND EGYPTIAN FACULTY IS OPPOSED. INTRODUCTION OF NEW SYSTEM WILL THEREFORE COME IN PIECES, STARTING WITH SEMESTER COURSES.

6. SECOND, CURRICULUM BASED ON UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT-- WITH KUEAIT'S MERCANTILE SERVICE ECONOMY RATHER THAN AGRICULTURE, ADEQUATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS EFD HIGHLY CONCENTRATED URBAN POPULATION--SIMPLY ISN'T RELEVANT TO UNCLASSIFIED

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YEMEN. IRYANI WANTS TO CUT BACK ON ENTRIES TO ALL SCHOOLS BUT EDUCATION AND SAYS, IN FACT, THAT SCHOOL SHOULD HAVE BEEN PLANNED FROM BEGINNING SIMPLY AS TEACHERS COLLEGE TO SUPPLY PERSONNEL TO RUN FELDGLING YEMENI SYSTEM SPREAD THROUGHOUT HUNDREDS OF ISOLATED YEMENI VILLAGES. COURSES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ARE USEFUL; YEMENI GRADUATES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE HAVE A LIMITED SCOPE.

7. THIRD, ADMISSION STANDARDS WILL HAVE TO BE RAISED AND ATTENDANCE REGULATED. IRYANI AND MUTTGYAR WANT TO RESTRICT ENTRY TO STUDENTS WITH 70 PERCENT AVERAGE AND TO REDUCE PRESENT PROPORTION OF AUDITORS-- WHO JUST TAKE EXAMS--FROM ABOUT 30 PERCENT TO 10 PERCENT.

8. FOURTH, MAJOR EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ENLIST MORE YEMENIS IN TEACHING RANKS AND UPGRADE THEIR CREDENTIALS. IRYANI PRESENTLY FINDING IT HARD TO GET AROUND REQUIREMENTS WHICH KUWAITIS IMPOSE AND EGYPTIANS DEFEND CON-

CERNING RELATIONSHIP OF RANK TO YEARS OF SERVICE AND LEVEL OF DEGREE. REQUIREMENTS MEAN YEMENIS WOULD TAKE YEARS TO RISE ABOVE INSTRUCTOR LEVEL. HE WANTS TO USE YEMENIS NOW WORKING IN GOVERNMENT FOR PART-TIME TEACHING AND ALSO SEND YEMENIS ABROAD FOR MA AND PH.D. STUDY.

9. SINCE MUTTAHAR ASSUMED HIS POSITION ABOUT FOUR MONTHS AGO, HE HAS TURNED TO THE EMBASSY AND USAID FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING THE UNIVERSITY. THESE REQUESTS AT FIRST TOOK SHAPE OF INCREASED REQUESTS FOR MASTER DEGREE TRAINING FOR YEMENI GRADUATES WHO WOULD RETURN TO TEACH IN SANA UNIVERSITY. NOW MUTTAHAR WANTS HELP IN BUILDING AMERICAN SECTION OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, TRAINING OF UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS, TRAINING OF A LIBRARIAN, AN AMERICAN LECTURER TO LECTURE IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT WHERE POSSIBLE OF LINKS WITH AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY TO HELP WITH SPECIFIC DEPARTMENTS. UNCLASSIFIED

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MUTTAHAR WITH STRONG IRYANI BACKING HAS REQUESTED AND USAID HAS AGREED TO FUND A TWO MONTH TRIP FOR HIM TO THE US THIS SUMMER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOW TO ESTABLISH A TWO-SEMESTER SYSTEM WITH CREDIT HOURS AND FREQUENT EXAMINATIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION.

10. EMBASSY FEELS THAT THIS PERIOD IN DEVELOPMENT OF SANA UNIVERSITY IS CRUCIAL. YARG HAS WISELY DECIDED TO MAKE IT AN UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION CORRESPONDING WITH YEMEN'S MAPOWER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. YARG WILL CONTINUE FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE TO SEND GRADUATES ABROAD FOR MA AND PH.D. TRAINING. SANA UNIVERSITY NEEDS ADVISE NOW HOW TO BEST PROCEED AND WE NEED ADVICE ON HOW DIFFERENT US AGENCIES CAN BEST COORDINATE EFFORTS OF ASSISTANCE.

11. THUS WE REQUEST THAT CU/NEA IN COORDINATION USAID SEND INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERTS TO VISIT SANA UNIVERSITY IN MAY (BEFORE MUTTAHAR TRIP) TO EXAMINE PRESENT FACILITIES AND YEMEN'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AND TO ADVISE ON STEPS USG SHOULD TAKE TO ASSIST.

12. TO ENABLE MUTTAHAR GET MAXIMUM BENEFIT HIS TRIP TO US UNIVERSITIES IN JULY AND AUGUST, REQUEST CU/NEA AND AID/W COORDINATE IN DRAWING UP BEST POSSIBLE PROGRAM FOR HIM INCLUDING TRIP TO GEORGETOWN FOR HIM TO DISCUSS "GEORGETOWN PROPOSAL." UNIV. MICHIGAN'S VICE PRESIDENT AND BFS MEMBER MICHAEL RADOCK WHO VISITED SANA UNIVERSITY HAS INVITED MUTTAHAR TO MICHIGAN. A TRIP TO MUTTAHAR'S ALMA MATER UNIV. INDIANA MIGHT BE USEFUL. PERHAPS

THE UNIVERSITIES HE WOULD VISIT IN THE SUMMER COULD
SEND REPS HERE IN MAY TO LOOK AT SANA UNIVERSITY.

13. SANA UNIVERSITY IS NOT LIKELY TO PROVIDE MAIN OR
EVEN MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF GRADUATES FOR YEMEN FOR
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YEARS. IT TURNED OUT 60 GRADUATES LAST YEAR(ITS
FIRST CLASS) AND NEXT YEAR WILL PRODUCE FIRST GROUP OF
EDUCATION GRADUATES (150). BUT CLASSES OF 600 A
YEAR OR MORE WILL NOT MATERIALIZE UNTIL 80'S, AND
GRADUATES FROM OTHER ARAB, EUROPEAN, RUSSIAN AND US
UNIVERSITIES WILL PARALLEL SANA PRODUCTION FOR LONG
TIME. STILL, THE SYSTEM WILL BE CRUCIAL TO DEVELOPMENT,
POLITICS, ADMINISTRATION AND CULTURE OF THIS INTER-

ESTING LAND AND A LITTLE US HELP NOW CAN PAY LARGE
DIVIDENDS OVER RATHER SHORT TIME.
SCOTES

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED TO ABOVE ADDRESSEE.

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